

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- U.S. ROLE IN MIDEAST

1. SUMMARY. CONJUNCTION OF U.S. REASSESSMENT OF MIDEAST POLICY, SENATOR MCGOVERN'S STATEMENT OF POSITION IN JERUSALEM, RENEWED CALLS FOR CONVENING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA GIVES BEIRUT PRESS OF WEEKEND OF APRIL 5-6 MAJOR OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON U.S. AND ITS ROLE IN MIDEAST. END SUMMARY.

2. IN COMMENTING ON U.S. REASSESSMENT OF MIDEAST POLICY, A NUMBER OF MODERATE PAPERS STRESS THAT FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE IS POSSIBLE PROVIDED U.S. MAKES THE NECESSARY MOVES. THUS, PRO-EGYPTIAN "AL-YAWN" BELIEVES THAT "IF AMERICA WANTS PEACE, IT MUST FORCE ISRAEL TO ABANDON ITS TERRITORIES," AND PRO-WEST ENGLISH-LANGUAGE "DAILY STAR" NOTES THAT PRESIDENT SADAT "WILL CERTAINLY GEAR HIS NEXT MOVES TO EXTENT THAT WASHINGTON REWARDS HIS PATIENCE AND MODERATION." OTHER, MORE RADICAL PAPERS EXPRESS CONTINUING LACK OF COFIDENCE IN U.S. AND THUS DISCOUNT REASSESSMENT ENTIRELY. PRO-IRAQI "BEIRUT" ASK ITSELF "WHY IS THERE ALL THIS FUSS ABOUT UNCLASSIFIED

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REEVALUATION OF AMERICA POLICY IN MIDEAST?" AND ANSWERS THAT

"SCREAMING, YELLING, AND HEATED DAILY PRONOUNCEMENTS ... ARE IN FACT NOTHING BUT DUST IN OUR EYES TO DISTRACT US FROM PLOTS THAT ARE BEING HATCHED AGAINST US IN CORRIDORS OF WHITE HOUSE." BUT PAPER ALSO NOTES THAT "AMERICAN PEOPLE ... HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT POLICIES OF ITS CAPITALIST SYSTEM ARE RESPONSIBLE TO GREAT EXTENT FOR CRISES THEY ARE EXPERIENCING" AND CALLS ON U.S. TO DESIST FROM ITS AGGRESSIVE POLICY AND ESTABLISH NEW RELATIONS WITH WORLD. LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR" BELIEVES THAT "CONVULSIVE GROUP THAT SUPPORT TRADITIONAL IMPERIALIST POLICY ... BROUGHT FORTH MCGARTHY, GOLDWATER, JACKSON, AND JAVITS ... AND ESCALATED WAR IN VIETNAM ... MEANT KISSINGER TO FAIL."

3. IN COMMENTING ON SENATOR MCGOVERN'S STATEMENT OF POSITION IN JERUSALEM, BOTH MODERATE AND RADICAL PAPERS APPLAUD HIS VIEWS, BUT WARN THAT SENATOR MUST TRANSLATE THEM INTO ACTION. PRO-WEST ENGLISH-LANGUAGE "DAILY STAR" WRITES THAT "EVENT IS OF FUNDAMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE TO AMERICAN POLITICS IN GENERAL AND U.S.-ARAB RELATIONS IN PARTICULAR." LEADING INDEPENDENT "AN-NAHAR" CAUTIONS THAT "THERE IS NO LONGER ANY JUSTIFICATION FOR AMERICA'S INABILITY TO ACT ON ITS CONVICTIONS," WHILE PRO-SAUDI "AL-HAYAT" WARNS THAT "STATEMENT ... IS OF NO IMPORTANCE ... UNLESS SENATOR ACTS TO TRANSLATE HIS CONVICTION INTO REALITY" AND PRO-FEDAYEEN "AL-LIWA" BELIEVES "HE SHOULD TRANSLATE HIS WORDS INTO ACTION."

4. IN COMMENTING ON RENEWED CALLS FOR CONVENING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE, SOME PAPERS SUPPORT CONFERENCE IN PRINCIPLE BUT CALL FOR UNIFIED ARAB POSITION AND CLARIFICATION OF BASIS ON WHICH PLO IS TO ATTEND. "ASH-SHA'B" STATES THAT "WE EXPECT NOTHING FROM GENEVA CONFERENCE, BUT WE EXPECT MUCH FROM UNIFIED ARAB LEADERSHIP, WHICH ... REMAINS FACTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE RESULTS CONFERENCE MAY HAVE ... OUR FIRST AND LAST WEAPON IS OUR SOLIDARITY." PRO-LIBYAN "AS-SAFIR" SUPPORTS "MODERATE" PALESTINIAN CONTENTION THAT "ARAB LEADERS ARE OVERSIMPLIFYING ISSUES BY SAYING THAT IMPORTANT THING ... IS THAT PLO SHOULD ATTEND GENEVA CONFERENCE. IMPORTANT THING IS BASIS ON WHICH PLO IS TO ATTEND". OTHER "REJECTIONIST" PAPERS REJECT CONFERENCE ENTIRELY. PRO-IRAQI WEEKLY "AD-DUSTUR" UNCLASSIFIED

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CALLS ON PALESTINIANS TO "REJECT GOING TO GENEVA AND THEN AGREE ON UNIFIED FIGHTING STRATEGY TAKEN FROM SUCCESSFUL STRATEGY ... OF VIETNAMESE." SIMILARLY, PFLP WEEKLY ORGAN "AL-HADAF" CRITICIZES "REACTIONARY ARAB ALLIANCE THAT IS NOW HEADING TOWARD GENEVA" AND STRESSES THAT "REJECTION OF GENEVA CONFERENCE IS NATIONALIST POSITION."

5. IN COMMENTING ON LESSONS OF EVENTS IN INDOCHINA FOR

MIDEAST, LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR" FINDS DORECT
PARALLEL: "ARAB ARE NO LESS NUMEROUS AND NO LESS STRONGLY
ARMED THAN THEIR VIETNAMESE COMRADES ... AND AGENTS IN
TEL AVIV ARE NO STRONGER OR MORE FULLY ARMED THAN THOSE IN
SAIGON." "AL-MUHARRIR" AND OTHER RADICAL PAPERS ALSO
DESCRIBE EVENTS IN INDOCHINA AS CLEAR PROFF THAT RELIANCE ON
U.S. FOR SOLUTIONS IS FOOLHARDY AND CRITICIZE EGYPT FOR DOING
SO. "AT-MUHARRIR" WRITES THAT "WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND SECRET
OF CONTINUING TO BET ON AMERICAN HORSE, WHICH HAS LOST ALL OF
ITS RACES." PRO-LIBYAN "AS-SAFIR" NOTES THAT ALTHOUGH
"AMERICAN IMPERIALISM IS TODAY FACING WHAT EVERYONE
DESCRIBES AS DECAY AND COLLAPSE ... EGYPTIAN DEPLOMAACY
NSISTS ON CONTINUED RELIANCE ON AMERICA POLICY AND
CONTINUED FAITH IN KISSINGER'S DIPLOMATIC ABILITY." PRO-
SOVIET LEBANESE COMMUNIST PARTY ORGAN "AN-NIDA" CROWS THAT
"LESSONS OF INDOCHINA ... HAVE PROVEN THOUSAND TIMES OVER THAT
NOTHING IS OF ANY USE WITH AMERICA -- NO ATTEMPT TO AVOID
EMBARRASSING IT, NO EFFORT TO STIR ITS SELF-RESPECT."
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